UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/234
2 April 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 1 APRIL 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On the occasion of the adoption of the presidential statement on a consultation mechanism for troop-contributing countries with the Security Council, and upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to reiterate the position of the Government of Egypt, which was earlier addressed to the President of the Security Council in my letters dated 1 December 1992 (S/24878) and 27 October 1994 (S/1994/1231).

The Government of Egypt considers it a matter of principle that troop-contributing countries express their views to the Security Council on matters relevant to the troops in the field.

It is a basic premise that a State that places its military, police or civilian personnel at the service of the international community for a peace-keeping operation, with the possibility of putting the lives of these men and women at risk, acquires the legitimate right to be consulted by the Security Council, in the way that the Council deems most appropriate. This right has not been recognized in the present text of the presidential statement (S/PRST/1996/13).

At any given time, the overwhelming majority of the United Nations peace-keeping forces are from States that are not members of the Security Council. These forces and observers are being mandated by the Security Council to perform in a dangerous environment. Troop-contributing countries should therefore be consulted before decisions affecting the lives and safety of their nationals are taken by the Security Council. To this effect, the Council should apply the spirit of Article 44 of the Charter of the United Nations.

We consider that, in due time, the Security Council should resume the examination of this issue in order to find the necessary consensus for this right to be recognized not only de facto but also de jure.

The delegation of Egypt joined the consensus to adopt the presidential statement because it was a step in the right direction since it stipulates that "the Security Council recalls that the arrangements described above are not

exhaustive. They do not preclude consultations in a variety of forms, including informal communication between the Council President or its members and troop-contributing countries and, as appropriate, with another countries especially affected, for example, countries from the region concerned" and that "the Security Council will continue to keep arrangements for consultations and the exchange of information and views with troop contributors and prospective contributors under review and stands ready to consider further measures and new mechanisms to enhance further the arrangements in the light of experience".

I should like to request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nabil ELARABY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
the Arab Republic of Egypt
to the United Nations